

On behalf of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation we are pleased to provide this Annual Report, which covers our activities from the creation of the Foundation on April 1, 1998 to September 13, 1999.

As the following report shows, a great deal of work was undertaken and completed over the course of the year.

We would like, at the outset, to thank all of those people who have participated in the work of the Foundation during this time: Survivors, External Merit Review Panel members, Elders and, last but certainly not least, the Staff. Your dedication and hard work is appreciated.

We extend our gratitude to John Amagoalik, Charlene Belleau, Pitseolak (Janet Brewster), Maggie Hodgson, Ann Meekitjuk-Hanson, Debbie Reid and Gene Rheume, past Board members who have moved on to other challenges.

We appreciate your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to the healing of our peoples. Finally, we acknowledge the officials of the various Canadian Government departments who were instrumental in helping us establish the Foundation.

The mission of the Foundation is to encourage and support Aboriginal people in building and reinforcing sustainable healing processes that address the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in the residential school system, including intergenerational impacts.

We have four years to spend or commit the money entrusted to us. Survivors have told us to get those funds flowing to the communities as quickly as possible. We have been driven by that need and have acted accordingly.

We set out, early last year, a number of specific objectives for our first year of operation. These objectives include:

- ❖ the selection of a Board of Directors;
- ❖ consultation with Survivors and Survivor organizations;
- ❖ the establishment of core documents (Program Handbook, Ethics Guideline and Framework for Project Evaluation);
- ❖ the establishment of a base of operations in Ottawa;
- ❖ organizational development including the hiring of staff (90% of whom are Aboriginal);
- ❖ the development of supporting infrastructure (databases, funding and financial software);
- ❖ the establishment of investment policies in keeping with the requirements of our Funding Agreement with the Canadian government;
- ❖ the adoption of a Mission, Vision and Values Statement; and
- ❖ the development of funding proposal criteria based on input from Survivors.

We achieved those objectives and more:

- ❖ the establishment of a Proposal Development Assistance Fund;
- ❖ the completion of 18 information sessions across the country;
- ❖ the establishment of a new communications and identity program; and
- ❖ most importantly, the completion of the first funding cycle through which \$40 million has already been approved.

I'd like to take a moment to break the numbers down for you. The Board projected that we would fund \$50 million in proposals for the first round (all themes under all three deadlines). We have now conditionally approved about \$40 million for all themes.

We recently gave conditional approval for:

- ❖ \$3.4 million for Healing Centres;
- ❖ \$608 thousand for Restoring Balance; and
- ❖ \$482 thousand for Honour & History.

Approved projects under these themes will be going to our finance staff who will negotiate and enter into contribution agreements over the coming weeks.

In the meantime, we continue to fund projects under our first deadline (Community Therapeutic Healing and Developing & Enhancing Aboriginal Capacity).

The Board had approved \$19.4 million for these two themes. At time of writing of the Annual Report, we had committed about \$16.8 million. Almost \$5.2 million has actually flowed to projects in the form of quarterly payments. Finance staff continue to negotiate and enter into contribution agreements on a daily basis.

The types of projects funded, so far, under the first funding round include: sex offender programs; education, counseling and trauma work; development of Aboriginal-specific materials; training of community members; employee assistance programs; and support for traditional therapeutic approaches.

Through the work we have accomplished and that which lies ahead, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation is assisting Aboriginal communities as they work to heal the legacy of the residential school system. We will continue to work to improve our ability to help.

We will also work to engage Canadians in this healing process, encouraging them to walk with us on the path of reconciliation. We will reach out to a wide range of stakeholders including the churches, governments and the corporate sector to form partnerships in establishing a charitable foundation, the goal of which will be to continue the healing process once our work is done.

We know that the success of the projects we are funding today, and those we will be funding in the future, will empower individuals, families and communities who are struggling to bind the wounds inflicted by the residential school system.

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